International Network on Peace Building with Young Children

Paper Two

October 2010

Contents

1.   Introduction

The Peace Building Learning Group of UNA, the Global Learning Initiative on Children and Ethnic Diversity, is concerned with sharing and disseminating knowledge and expertise in relation to the development and delivery of early childhood programmes. It has a particular focus on the specific challenges and problems that arise from doing this in regions that are either experiencing significant armed conflict and/or are emerging out of armed conflict.

The Peace Building Learning Group is co-chaired by Siobhan Fitzpatrick, CEO of Early Years in Northern Ireland and Marta Arango, Executive Director of CINDE in Colombia. The group operates within the context of the core values of UNA:

- Children's rights and participation
- Evidence informed development
- Outcomes focused orientation

This is the second paper devised by the Peace Building Learning Group (Learning Group 2) of UNA and follows on directly from paper one which presented an overview of the key issues and challenges facing early childhood organisations when developing programmes in conflict affected regions. Paper one, entitled *Protecting and Providing for Young Children in Regions Affected by Conflict – A Framework for Practice* also looked at the nature and impact of conflict on young children and their communities and the paper proposed a programmatic framework that can be used by practitioners to help focus their planning and development of such programmes.

The second paper from Learning Group 2 will map how the programmatic framework from paper one might be applied in practice in conflict affected countries around the world. Members of the International Network on Peace Building with Young Children have examined programmes with which they are involved in their own countries and these programmes have been put forward as examples of best practice from their regions.

These programmes represent both the northern and southern hemispheres and east and west and include the following countries:

- Northern Ireland
- Serbia
- Iraq
- Nepal
- South Africa
- Colombia
- Lebanon
- Georgia
- El Salvador
- Palestine
- Chad

2.   Conclusion from Paper One

The publication *From Conflict to Peace Building: The Power of Early Childhood Initiatives* which contained stories from conflict regions around the world identified the following questions in relation to the work of the early childhood community in conflict and post conflict societies:

- What support is required by caregivers in helping them deal with the effects of violence in children's lives?

- How best can we listen to the voices of young children and help them explore in a safe environment their experience of conflict?

- In situations where there are high and intense levels of violence, how do we go about meeting the needs of children when their families and communities are literally disintegrating?

- How can we work effectively with families and communities in many different contexts and cultures?

- How can we be effective advocates for children living in conflict affected societies?

- What role can the early childhood professional play in terms of building peaceful communities?

These questions were key in helping to guide the thinking of the Learning Group and in tackling the challenges of developing a programmatic framework.

2.1   Developing the Framework – Stages of Conflict

In devising programmes for working with young children, members of the Learning Group reached the consensus that at the core of any framework should be the recognition that all countries were not necessarily going through the same type of conflict. The Group also felt that these different types and stages of conflict should form the basis of any programmatic framework.

Narayan's Programming Framework (CIDA 2001) considered three stages of conflict to consider when examining the impact on children in conflict affected areas. However Learning Group 2 used the five stages of conflict model described by Brahm (2003) in relation to the socio political context of programmatic development. The model identifies the following stages:

- pre-conflict
- escalation
- peak
- de-escalation (negotiation)
- post conflict (reconstruction and prevention)

The Learning Group also made particular reference to the non linear and interlinking aspects of each stage.

2.2 Developing the Framework – Societal Impact

The next step in developing the framework was to identify the social systems which impact on children in both non-conflict and conflict situations. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory was a useful starting point in the Learning Group's thinking as it specifies five types of environmental systems which lead the Group to consider the following social structures which surround the child:

- Family
- Early Years Setting
- Wider Community
- Culture, Economics, Governance, Research, Media
- Change over time (chronosystem)

Taking into account these social systems and the different stages of conflict, the following programmatic framework was devised which would assist practitioners in the planning of programmes which would work at the different levels during the five stages of conflict.

The Learning Group wanted the framework to be clear and easy to use and transferable across countries and cultures. Although early childhood programmes are operating in very different cultural contexts and at different stages of conflict, some of the issues for children and families are in many ways similar.

The programmatic framework focuses on the areas and different levels we need to strategically network across if we are to become strong advocates for children.
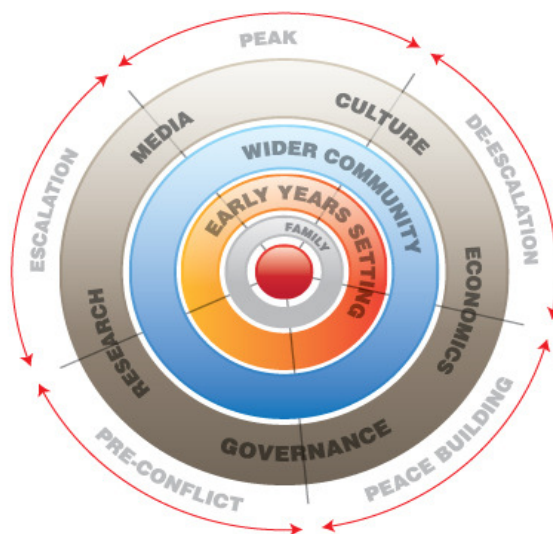

Figure 1: Programmatic Framework for Early Years Practitioners Working in Conflict

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2.3 Approaches to Programmatic Mapping - Transferrable or Culturally Specific?

The notion of programmes being transferrable across cultures is in itself contested and merited further examination. One of the challenges for the Learning Group has been in identifying common understandings and approaches that are relevant in a cross cultural context. Is using the media for early childhood development (ECD) in Northern Ireland some kind of learning that can be transferred to South Africa or Colombia? Does the concept of Zones of Peace mean the same thing in Iraq as in Nepal?

Not only are societies experiencing different stages of conflict but also the cultural understandings of how best to address these can differ. In addition, the cultural understandings of childhood and the context of the various social structures described in the programmatic tool also vary from place to place. In some contexts, the assumption is that young children are with their families; in other situations, this primary circle of care may be broken and an alternative structure established to nurture and protect.

The combination of these factors makes it challenging to identify a set of universal principles that can be applied across contexts and at different stages of conflict. In the development of the Group's thinking between papers one and two, it was decided that rather than considering culture as a system within the programmatic tool, culture would be considered in terms of how it influences each system. This approach captured the complexity of how culture influences from family through to governance.

2.4 Elicitive versus Prescriptive

This tension between applying a set of universal principles and building from the cultural context up has been identified within conflict transformation theory more broadly. The distinction between 'elicitive' and 'prescriptive' approaches was first described by John Paul Lederach's (1996) paper entitled *Preparing for Peace, Conflict Transformation across Cultures*. Following on from this, the difference in approach is described as follows by Douglas Young:

"Prescriptive approaches generally assume universal models of conflict resolution which are then applied or adopted in particular cultural situations."

"Elicitive approaches, on the other hand, recognise the existence of distinctive cultural understandings of conflict and its resolution which are then clarified, elucidated and enhanced through reflection and dialogue."

Prescriptive	Elicitive
Training as transfer	Training as discovery
Resource - knowledge of trainer	Resource - within setting knowledge
Training content orientated	Training process orientated
Master approach and technique	Participate in model creation

Empowerment learning new strategies	Empowerment validating from context
Trainer as expert	Trainer as catalyst
Culture as technique	Culture as foundation/seedbed
Assumes universality-transfer based	May miss cross-cultural

There are strengths in both prescriptive and elicitive approaches. While elicitive approaches have undoubted strength in their participative, process orientated approach, they may miss the opportunity for cross-cultural learning. The Learning Group recognises that members are interested in international networking opportunities precisely because they want to move beyond current practices in their own context and learn from others. Cross-cultural networks are one of the richest ways of learning and expanding knowledge and as Lederach points out, it is essential that empowerment is embedded in the process of knowledge exchange:

"What is crucial in maintaining empowerment is a high view of participation, being provided a voice and the power to evaluate and decide which ultimately is rooted in their understanding of themselves and their own setting." (Lederach 1996).

In developing the programmatic tool, our Group has been mindful to build participative group work exercises and opportunities for reflective practice into the process at all stages. While Lederach and Young are describing approaches to conflict resolution and transformation more broadly, the methodology they describe is relevant to the task of developing the programmatic tool. In developing the tool, the Group has used the universal principles of child rights as a guide but interfaced this with exploring more deeply the cultural contexts of childhood and of conflict in the different locations.

In this way, the Learning Group has used both elicitive and prescriptive processes in what has been described in conflict resolution theory as a 'hybrid model'.

3. Comparative Perspectives on ECD and Conflict

In paper one, the Learning Group reviewed a range of theoretical perspectives on the impact of conflict on children. In this paper we have put specific focus on the emerging body of work on comparative perspectives on ECD and conflict. Since the landmark Machel report (1996) there has been a range of studies on the impact of conflict on children (Cohn 1994, Cairns 1996, Narayan 2001), and a number of these from a rights based perspective (Freeman 1996, Harvey 2003).

There is little however that focuses on the needs and rights of younger children specifically and less still that looks at this within a comparative context. The invisibility of young children within theoretical discourse reflects their invisibility at the level of policy and governance which in turn has significant ramifications for the support and resourcing of ECD interventions. The lack of focus on young children in state policy is noted by Garcia, Pence and Evans (2008) in their recent analysis of ECD programmes in Africa:

"For much of the 20th century and throughout most of the world, early childhood (from birth through school entry) was largely invisible as a state-policy concern. Children, in the eyes of most states, were an appendage of their parents, or were simply embedded in the larger family structure. The child as an individual social entity was largely formless. Children did not emerge from the shadow of their families until they entered school, typically at age 6 or 7." (Garcia, Pence and Evans, 2008).

The gap in literature relating to ECD in areas of conflict was recognised in Connolly and Hayden's 2007 work *From Conflict to Peacebuilding* (Connolly and Hayden 2007). Using a sequence of practitioner narrated stories, the book captured innovative practice with young children in areas caught up in or emerging from armed conflict situations. Connolly and Hayden conclude that although this work is taking place in different contexts it is possible to identify a number of core issues that transcend specific situations and represent key challenges for practitioners.

The key lessons that the Connolly and Hayden study identified are:
• the need to develop quality child centred environments and safe spaces for young children to express their feelings
• the need to provide training and support to those working with young children
• the provision of direct support to parents
• the need for a community development approach

On a broader level, Connolly and Hayden identify that the early years sector has considerable potential to contribute to peace building and to advocacy for children nationally and internationally (Connolly and Hayden, 2007).

The Learning Group's view is that the programmatic approach identified in paper one and expanded in this paper takes account of these recommendations from the level of family support to the level of advocacy.

The 2008 study of ECD in Sub Saharan Africa by Garcia, Pence and Evans includes a chapter by Wessels and Monteiro reviewing ECD programmes in Angola. The authors identify

the gulf between well meaning calls for action and effective programming that makes an impact:

"Support for young children in war zones is easier to call for than to construct. In addition to issues of logistics, security, and resource scarcity, thorny issues arise concerning concept as well as practice. Poorly conceptualized efforts frequently have limited, unsustainable impact, and some violate the humanitarian imperative of "do no harm." (Wessels and Monteiro, 2008).

This is an important issue highlighting the need for quality interventions and evidence based impact in programming. CCF's programme in Angola which is examined in some detail in the chapter stands on four strategies. The first of these is the use of an ecological approach recognising that in order to support young children, it is necessary to support their caregivers. Wessels and Monteiro draw on research by Garbarino et al:

"Young children's wellbeing is strongly linked with that of their mothers, who typically provide care and protection. Research has shown consistently that the single most important factor in enabling children's well-being is the care of a competent, emotionally available adult caregiver." (Garbarino, Kostelny and Barry, 1998).

The ecological approach grounded in Bronfenbrenner's systems theory (Bronfenbrenner 1979, Dawes and Donald 2000) forms the basis of the programmatic tool that this Learning Group proposes. Wessels and Montiero expand the parent-child relationship to include sibling caregivers, recognising that parental resilience and capacity can be severely diminished in conflict situations:

"This principle should be expanded to include sibling caregivers, because it is not uncommon for an older sister to care for children who have been weaned. Unfortunately, the accumulation of severe stresses in the conflict and post conflict situations overwhelms some mothers, causing depression, poor lactation, health problems and difficulties providing care and protection. While other mothers exhibit relatively high levels of resilience, the impact of war and hardships may have degraded their parenting skills, made them less attentive to young children's needs, or encouraged a fatalistic attitude toward their children's health and well-being. In this context, it is useful to focus on supporting both mother and child and their relationship rather than focusing on young children alone."(Wessels and Monteiro, 2008).

The second strategy identified is community mobilisation, which advocates an empowerment model rather than a service model for emergency support. Here the authors highlight the dangers of external agencies providing support and how this can diminish local capacity:

"When well-intentioned agencies provide services for war-affected children and adults, they risk creating dependency and tacitly encourage local people to take a relatively passive role that is antithetical to recovery and sustainable development. Psychologically, a key to recovery is for people to regain a sense of personal and collective efficacy and the ability to influence their children's well-being. In fact, following an overwhelming experience, the reassertion of control - even in small ways - is a valuable source of psychosocial support." (Wessels and Monteiro, 2008)

The rationale is that as communities mobilise and plan, they engage in a process of collective healing that allows them to put the time of war behind them, reweave the shattered social

fabric, form relationships offering support and rekindle hope for the future. The proposal is that this should be the approach from the outset, even in the initial stages of a conflict or emergency. Wessels and Montiero use the example of communities addressing child protection and the efficacy of local mechanisms for monitoring and reducing risks and for preventing the abuse and exploitation of young children.

The third strategy identified is programme integration. The lack of interaction across sectors results in a non holistic approach which wastes resources, fails to build synergy and address the holistic needs of the child. To address this problem, CCF Angola uses *"an integrative strategy of building psychosocial and protection supports for young children into multiple sectors of humanitarian assistance."* Importantly, the integration strategy warns against targeting specific groups advising that an 'exclusive focus on a particular group can create jealousies, marginalise those not receiving aid, and divide communities at the moment when they most need unity. In this respect, a programme integration strategy makes the support of young children one element in a wider system of supports for all children.

The fourth strategy identified by Wessels and Montiero is to use a culturally grounded approach. Through ethnographic research, the programme in Angola has mapped local beliefs and practices, identifying resources such as healers, rituals and other cultural practices that are then used to support children. Importantly the programme recognises that there can be a conflict between respect for culture and the paramountcy of children's rights:

"Recognizing that not all cultural practices are positive, the CCF team takes a critical stance by avoiding romanticizing local culture and by respecting children's rights. In addition to reducing ethnocentric biases, this approach helps to avoid problems of imposing outsider views of childhood, what is good for children, and how to support children. When outsider views are privileged, as occurs in many situations, the results are the disempowerment of local people, the marginalization of local practices, and the conversion of humanitarian aid into a form of neo-colonialism." (Dawes and Cairns, 1998; Wessells, 1999)

The authors identify a deeper problem with outsider led approaches in that they encourage local people to see their culture as inferior thus inhibiting the development of community and grassroots led approaches. This is a vital point in developing programmatic approaches in an international context and further stresses the importance of elicitive over prescriptive approaches (Lederach, 1995).

The 2008 paper produced by ACEV *Building a Generation of Reconciliation, the role of ECD in Peace Building* (ACEV 2008) similarly identifies two levels of programming focus:

• at the micro level - building pro-peace values, attitudes and skills in young children
• at macro level - ECD for changing economic and social structures towards more peaceful societies.

Again, this ecologically based analysis is consistent with the approach proposed by our Learning Group which addresses the different social systems. The practice example in the ACEV report demonstrates the bringing together of the micro and macro through ECD and peace building in Turkey. At micro level there is an emphasis on building empathy:

"While being present at birth, empathy gradually develops during infancy, through childhood and into adolescence. Empathic responses grow both in frequency and complexity during the first two years of life and the care environment in the fist years of life are extremely important for developing the child's ability to empathize with others." (Roth-Hanania, Busch-Rossnagel, & Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2000).

The paper emphasises the importance of the immediate environment and supporting parents, recognising that this shapes the child's value system and can determine the child's ability to manage conflict:

"Programs that entail a combination of intensive family support along with early education services address a multiple range of family risk factors for delinquency and provide the most cost effective methods of addressing the "environmental" causes of violence and crime. Early intervention in violence-prone or disadvantaged areas can lead to long-term positive and cost-effective results in reducing crime and violence." (ACEV 2008).

There is a clear common thread emerging in that the next area identified is the importance of child centered spaces:

"Child-care centers, kindergartens or nursery schools are potential safe spaces that can bring both children and parents together around a common goal even in the midst of high levels of inter-community tensions and widespread violence. Such safe spaces can play a key role in empowering pro-peace elements of the community by ensuring the presence of pockets of stability and peace. ECD programs with a strong parent education component can have a particularly powerful impact on social capital by bringing together parents in ways that build trust across divided groups." (ACEV 2008)

A significant addition to the body of research on comparative perspectives on young children and conflict is the 2009 INEE paper on Early Childhood Care and Development in Emergencies. The main recommendations of the INEE paper highlight the need to disseminate knowledge on the critical importance of the early years and the long-term impacts of trauma on a child's development, particularly around the area of stress and brain development. The recommendations identify opportunities to enrich, support, and enhance existing health and nutrition programmes by incorporating an ECD perspective into all interventions.

Again the importance of supporting families to cope with stress and recognising the critical role of positive child caregiver attachment and responsive interactions in the first two years of life is emphasised. The linking of early learning and primary school is highlighted as is the importance of educators being reminded *"that children need structured, routine and safe learning environments during times of risk."* Young children at particular risk e.g. girls and children with disabilities are identified as being in need of intensive services.

"At the macro level of policy and governance the recommendation is that governments and policymakers recognize that effective investments in the early years are a cornerstone of human development and central to the success of societies. Indeed, our planet provides no

examples of highly successful societies among those who have ignored development in the early years." (INEE 2009).

While ECD and emergencies and ECD and conflict have important distinctions, there is significant overlap in that the outbreak and peak stages of conflict are often identified as emergencies as well as common ground in relation to post conflict reconstruction and reconstruction following emergencies.

However important distinctions remain and must be considered in that intra and inter communal conflict, ethnic tension, militarisation are not always a feature of emergencies and these have a particular impact on young children and families. These aspects are the particular concern of this Learning Group in developing comprehensive programming approaches. On the macro level, the cyclical aspect of war and conflict (Brahm, 2004) has a particular and different social and political dynamic from that for example of a natural disaster. The intergenerational impact on attitudes and behaviour in young children, parents and families and the challenges of social reconstruction in ethnically divided societies demonstrate the degree of challenge at micro and micro level that programmatic approaches must address.

4.   Using the Framework in Practice

Learning Group 2 feels that the programmatic framework is a useful tool for practitioners to map programmes against in order to maximise the potential of their programmes and to minimise the negative effects of conflict on young children. When mapping programmes against this framework, practitioners can ensure they are thinking about all the layers that impact on the child during all the stages of conflict.

The mapping exercise will also show which layers haven't been taken into consideration and what gaps there are in ensuring effective protection for the child.

The following in-depth case study on the Media Initiative for Children shows the framework in action and how a well rounded programme covers all the systems contained in the framework.

4.1   The Media Initiative for Children Respecting Difference Programme

The Media Initiative for Children is a Respecting Difference Programme which was developed in a post conflict scenario by Early Years – the organisation for young children in Northern Ireland and the Peace Initiatives Institute in the United States. This programme has been explored in great depth as an example of how early childhood initiatives can be mapped on to the programmatic framework in order to ascertain how they are addressing the different levels in society that affect young children's development.

We have also looked at the development of the programme and the cultural context, and the stage of conflict in which the programme was developed was taken in to consideration, as well as the methods used to evaluate it. The mapping also looks at the lessons learned and how the evidence found will be used to influence policy and make a difference in the lives of young children in a post conflict situation.

4.2   The Cultural Context in which the Programme was Developed

Northern Ireland is politically part of the United Kingdom and located in the north east corner of the island of Ireland. It is a small but deeply divided country with the majority of its 1.7 million inhabitants belonging to one of two communities. The Unionist community, who are in the majority (53%), tend to be of the Protestant religion and view themselves as British, while the Nationalist community (44%), tend to be Catholic and view themselves as Irish.

From 1969 until the announcement of the ceasefires in 1994, Northern Ireland suffered a prolonged period of armed conflict. The conflict involved paramilitary groups representing both communities, as well as conflict between Republican paramilitaries and the British Army, with the former determined to drive Britain out of Northern Ireland and create a united Ireland. The British Army was protecting the interests of Britain and the loyalist paramilitary groups aimed to defeat republican paramilitaries in order to protect Northern Ireland's position as part of the United Kingdom (Connolly and Hayden, 2007). During the 25 years of armed conflict, over 3,600 people were killed and more than 40,000 were injured.

Following the ceasefires in 1994, a series of talks began between the British and Irish governments and representatives from the main political parties. These talks culminated in 1998 with the signing of the Belfast Agreement (also known as the Good Friday Agreement) and the formation of the Northern Ireland Assembly, the region's devolved government. The Assembly is responsible for many issues including: economic and social matters; agriculture and rural development; culture; arts; education; health; social services and public safety.

The Northern Ireland Executive, comprising ministers from all the political parties, meets to agree on significant issues and puts forward proposals for new laws for the Assembly to consider. It is made up of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, representing the two main communities in Northern Ireland as well as ten ministers.

Although the peace process has been in operation for almost 15 years, the legacy of the violence has, understandably, left the country deeply divided. Protestants and Catholics tend to live in segregated communities and children go to segregated schools. Even sports and social events tend to be segregated in Northern Ireland with families and communities celebrating different events.

However the threat of paramilitary style activities has never gone away, with the emergence of dissident republican terrorists who have been carrying out bomb and gun attacks in communities across Northern Ireland.

At the time of writing, a 200lb car bomb exploded in the city of Derry, injuring two police officers and causing major damage to nearby businesses. The Real IRA has since taken responsibility for the attack.

Such activities reinforce the findings of the Learning Group in that the cycles of violence are non linear and that countries can move backwards as well as forwards through the various stages of conflict. According to Save the Children, there is a 44% chance of countries in post conflict scenarios relapsing into conflict within the first decade of peace.

4.3   Early Years – the organisation for young children in Northern Ireland

Early Years – the organisation for young children formerly known as NIPPA was founded in 1965 a few years before the last prolonged period of violence erupted in Northern Ireland. Throughout the 25 years of armed conflict, Early Years worked consistently to meet the needs of children and their families on both sides of the political divide. As a result, when the first paramilitary ceasefires were announced in 1994, the organisation was in a good position to make a significant contribution to the peace process.

Early Years was asked to be an Intermediary Funding Body for the European Union Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation which aimed to help build peace in the region. The role of Early Years was to support the early years sector in Northern Ireland by overseeing a total investment of £40 million over a ten year period. This investment through the peace process created an opportunity to challenge sectarianism and encourage respect for diversity with children, parents and communities.

At a time when Early Years was working to develop an early years approach to dealing with the divisions in Northern Ireland, a research report was published (Connolly et al 2002)

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looking at the attitudes of children aged 3 to 6 years. The report entitled '*Too Young to Notice?*' showed that children as young as three years old were affected by the divisions between the communities. The most worrying aspect of the report was that by the age of six years, attitudes were found to have become more negative, with one in six children making overtly sectarian remarks.

4.4   The Birth of the Media Initiative for Children

Around this same time, representatives from the Peace Initiatives Institute (Pii) based in the USA were visiting Northern Ireland to explore ways of helping conflicted societies build peace with a focus on children. A core belief for Pii was that the mass media could be used to develop messages which could be combined with an early years curriculum and be used to grow a culture of respecting difference. Early Years and Pii established a formal partnership and were supported by an expert group of advisors from the media, community relations, education and research communities to develop the Media Initiative for Children (MIFC) Respecting Difference Programme.

From the beginning it was agreed that the approach would focus on growing a respect for all forms of difference, not just the sectarian difference.

The Media Initiative for Children uses cartoons, puppets, games and activities to positively expose children to diversity issues in a developmentally appropriate way at a stage when they are just becoming aware of the differences in their communities.

Initially the programme comprised of three one minute cartoons focusing on physical difference, racism and sectarianism. A pre-school programme and a resource pack were developed for use alongside the messages in pre-school settings. The resources were very innovative and depicted images of local cultural events representing the two main communities in Northern Ireland. Resources of this kind had not been available for young children before.

Pre-school practitioners were trained to use the resources and supported to explore their own experience of difference in a Northern Ireland context. Activities for parents were also developed to extend the programme at home and in 2004, the MIFC Respecting Difference Programme was piloted in ten pre-school settings across Northern Ireland.

A pilot research evaluation was carried out to assess if the programme had the potential to make a difference. Over a three week period, five of the groups implemented the programme while the other five acted as control groups.

Pre and post implementation research was carried out by Professor Paul Connolly from Queen's University Belfast who found that in just three weeks, measurable effects of the pilot programme were found in terms of:

- increases in young children's ability to recognise instances of exclusion without prompting
- their ability to understand how being excluded makes someone feel
- their willingness to play with others including those who are different to themselves

Since the MIFC programme was first piloted, much development work has taken place, based on feedback and evaluations from practitioners, parents, children and the early years specialists supporting many of the settings. The training for practitioners has been reviewed and extended, workshops for parents have been developed and new messages around bullying behaviours and the Traveller community are now part of the programme. Additional resources have been added to the resource pack and resources for parents to use in the home have also been developed.

A Service Design Manual was developed to support practitioners, teachers, early years specialists, training facilitators and early years agencies to implement the Media Initiative for Children.

In recent years, the MIFC programme has been developed for implementation in Primary Schools in Northern Ireland in line with the Foundation Stage of the curriculum. In addition, the programme is being rolled out in the Republic of Ireland, making it a real cross border initiative.

The major challenge which the Media Initiative for Children has faced is the reluctance of some practitioners to address the sectarian message. For many, this is a very sensitive subject which they haven't been used to facing head on and as such they have tended to shy away from it. However with the development of the five messages of the programme and with support from Early Years Specialists, practitioners have been given the confidence to address this message head on and to raise the previously taboo subject of religious background.

The Media Initiative for Children represents excellent value for money as the research shows that the programme has the potential to not only make a difference for young children but also their parents and those who work with them. The cost of making the programme available to a family has been calculated at approximately £156 per family. These costs would seem to be very modest in comparison with the cost to governments of dealing with the legacy of the conflict.

4.5   Research and Evidence-base for the Media Initiative

By 2008, the MIFC programme was being implemented across a range of early years settings in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, and funding was allocated to Early Years to evaluate the programme in a large number of pre-school settings over a one year period.

An interdisciplinary research team comprising the Centre for Effective Education at Queen's University Belfast, the National Children's Bureau (NCB) Northern Ireland and Stranmillis University College was commissioned by Early Years to undertake a rigorous and independent evaluation of the Media Initiative for Children. The evaluation took the form of a cluster randomised controlled trial, led by the Centre for Effective Education, and in depth qualitative case studies undertaken by NCB and Stranmillis University College.

4.5.1   Cluster Randomised Controlled Trial

The purpose of the cluster randomised controlled trial was to test whether the programme had a positive and measurable effect on a range of outcomes identified for the children, parents and practitioners participating in the programme. The trial was one of the largest ever

conducted of its type internationally and involved 74 pre-school settings that were selected randomly from settings in Northern Ireland (54) and counties Louth and Roscommon in the Republic of Ireland (10 per county). The settings were randomly allocated to either the intervention or control group.

A total of 1,181 children aged 3-4 years participated in the evaluation, together with 868 parents and 232 practitioners. The trial took place during the academic year 2008/09. Pre-testing was undertaken in September/October 2008 and the post-tests were conducted in May/June 2009. At both time points, children were tested individually and asked to complete a series of standardised tasks in which they were shown a variety of pictures and photographs and asked to identify and describe what they saw. Parents and practitioners were asked to complete questionnaires at pre-test and post-test stages that consisted of a series of questions and statements that respondents were required to indicate their response to on a Likert scale.

It is worth noting that over a quarter of all possible settings in Northern Ireland were not eligible to participate in the trial and were thus excluded because they had already actively volunteered to be trained in the delivery of the Media Initiative for Children Respecting Difference Programme. As such, this may have resulted in a final sample for this evaluation that had a disproportionate number of settings that were initially less committed to or enthusiastic about delivering a programme such as this one.

4.5.2 Qualitative Case Studies

The purpose of the in-depth qualitative case studies was to go beyond the quantitative findings of the trial in order to analyse the processes involved in delivering the programme and to track the experiences of practitioners, parents, management committees, Early Years Specialists and children involved in the programme throughout the year.

Four of the settings involved in delivering the programme as part of the randomised controlled trial were selected to act as case studies; three from Northern Ireland and one from the Republic of Ireland. Within this, two were located in predominantly rural areas and two in urban areas and two were located in areas of high deprivation and two in areas of low deprivation.

Data collection took place in three stages: prior to implementation of the programme; mid-way through the year; and when implementation was completed. A wide variety of data collection techniques were used including in-depth interviews; focus group discussions; and detailed observations of a number of sessions and activities associated with the programme.

4.5.3 Research Results

Robust evidence was found that the Media Initiative for Children Respecting Difference Programme achieved positive effects regarding children's attitudes and awareness in relation to their: socio-emotional development, cultural awareness and inclusive behaviour. The evaluation also found some potentially encouraging signs of positive change among both parents and practitioners in relation to increases in their awareness of the need to undertake diversity work with young children and also their confidence in their own ability to address such issues with their children.

4.5.4   Lessons Learned for Further Development

The research has made a number of suggestions for further development of the programme. These recommendations will be taken into consideration as the programme is continually reviewed to try to ensure the maximum positive effect on children, parents and communities. The research report states that:

"*It is notable that in relation to Northern Ireland, the need to address issues of diversity and to promote respect for difference in early childhood is not mentioned either in relation to the government's current consultation on the Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration (OFMDFM, 2010) or the Early Years (0-6) Strategy (Department of Education, 2010). Given the cumulative weight of evidence that now exists locally regarding how attitudes form at an early age, and in light of the strong evidence provided through this present trial of the role that early childhood initiatives can have in bringing about real and measurable positive change, it is imperative that issues of diversity and difference form a key component of any early childhood strategy and that such a strategy, in turn, represents a key element of any wider programme to promote community cohesion.*"

Early Years has invested a huge amount of energy, time and funding into the development of the Media Initiative for Children Respecting Difference Programme. The programme has been subjected to robust evaluation and evidence has been found to show that the programme can make a difference.

This evidence will be used to lobby for the rights and needs of children with the aim of influencing policy change.

Throughout the Randomised Controlled Trial period, an International Advisory Group which has included senior researchers from around the world, has been consulted and has also given advice on the research. One of the members of this group Mark Dynarski, from Mathematica, the centre for improving research evidence in the USA has stated that the research is transparent, objective and replicable.

The Learning Group noted that few early years peace programmes have been subjected to this amount of rigorous evaluation and as a result, there have been expressions of interest from other colleagues who believe that contextually adapted versions of the Media Initiative for Children Respecting Difference could have an impact in their countries. Serbia, Colombia, Iraq, Cyprus and Turkey have shown major interest in this programme.

5.   Framework for Analysis

The proposed framework for analysis is around the Bronfenbrenner based social systems identified in the programmatic tool, examining the common ground and the differences at each level. This will also be interfaced with a child rights perspective. The lens of culture will provide another consideration at each level. What Bronfenbrenner identifies as the chronosystem, (change over time), we have incorporated within the programmatic tool to describe the different stages and phases of conflict.

The following is an analysis of observed commonalities and differences observed based on the information received through elicitive processes from group members. This has been of particular importance from the perspective of cultural context and also with regard to discussions of values, approach and methodology.

In defining and describing programmatic work, we must look not only at the content but the values and approach that inform this. The Learning Group was well placed in this regard as participants ranged from those who are implementing or coordinating ECD programmes to those principally involved in research and policy work. The importance of action and reflection at all these levels was agreed to be fundamental to effective ECD programming, those involved in policy work need to have an awareness of how a policy can be actioned and evaluated on the ground and practitioners working on the ground need to be connected to research bodies and policy making. Where there is a disconnect at any level, the potential impact on the child is weakened.

The framework for analysis has been constructed from the elicitive discussions and group work processes and is presented within the Bronfenbrenner based social systems identified in the programmatic tool. Key commonalities are highlighted as well as particular challenges within each area. We have given some illustrative practice based examples of situations where either practice has been particularly effective or where challenges or modifiables have emerged. A number of examples show impact across a range of social systems, for example programmes which impact on families but also on policy. In this way the mapping shows that more effective ECD programmes in situations of conflict operate across several social systems in order to achieve sustainable impact on the needs and rights of the child.

Child

Here there is a prevailing theme of safe spaces for children. This concept originated in the 1980s - the idea of children as a 'conflict-free zone' - that children should be protected from harm and provided with the essential services to ensure their survival and well-being. It was first initiated in El Salvador in 1985 and the interpretation of this varies from place to place. Access to health care characterises child friendly spaces in Chad and Colombia where feeding centres and access to primary health care is also combined with provision of play opportunities.

In Palestine and in Lebanon, there is a dual emphasis on safe zones offering play, sport, art and psychological support. The emphasis on psycho social support is also a feature of provision in Iraq and the opportunity to express feelings is a feature of safe spaces in El Salvador. In Northern Ireland, the emphasis is on emotional intelligence and expressing feelings. In Serbia and Colombia there is an emphasis on registration of children where the

right to identity is also a means to protect children, for example from trafficking. The fundamental right of the child is safety, both physical and psychological, and the emphasis of the programmes is that specific space needs to be created for young children, where their particular needs can be addressed.

Featured Example: What happens when safe zones are not tuned in to children's needs? Palestine and El Salvador

Some examples emerged from the Learning Groups discussions where flaws in either the physical or psychological approach to safe spaces diminished their effectiveness.

In El Salvador the experience was that safe spaces were remote from real life and some distance from home with children transported there and back by bus. Where there would be a violent incident in the community involving a child, others would tend to stay away from the safe spaces for a few weeks before they would start to return.

In Palestine the experience has been that in relation to psycho social support for young children there is a tendency to import ready made models off the shelf, which can sometimes do more harm than good. Ideally culturally appropriate methods and tools would be developed. This is crucial for example in Gaza where it is estimated that 80% of the population suffer from mental health problems. It was noted that in a crisis or emergency stage of conflict that it is no less important that interventions are quality proofed but that in practice this is often ignored.

Family

The link between family and community is very much in evidence here with many programmes operating at the interface between family and community. As Machel states: *"children's well-being is best ensured through family and community based solutions that draw on local culture and an understanding of child development."*

This is explicit in Colombia in the provision of Family Community Centres providing access to health and nutrition and improving the health of home environments. In Palestine, the wider community supports parents where their capacity to protect is diminished. They recognise parents have suffered loss and abuse and men have often lost their masculine function. Also there is a special focus on mothers who have lost their partners and who are now the breadwinners as well as the primary carers. In Colombia and Serbia, programmes emphasised the registration of children and parents in order to access services. Training, workshops, classes and counselling for parents was a feature of programmes in Chad, Palestine, Nepal and Northern Ireland. In Chad, during the intensity of conflict, these were spaces where parents could share the pain and trauma they had been through.

In Northern Ireland, in a post conflict setting the space for parents has a greater degree of safety than before and parents could address issues that divided them, sometimes for the first time. Similarly to Northern Ireland, in Georgia there was a socio-political focus to work with parents with an emphasis on developing the awareness of parents. In Northern Ireland parent workshops are reflective spaces where the experiences of parents' own childhoods were shared. This kind of sharing particularly in an intra community basis would be very difficult at the escalation or peak of conflict. At this point, developing the skills and capacity of parents, particularly mothers, was a focus in Palestine.

Featured Example: The child's right to identity, achieving policy change through building trust with families - Registration of children in Serbia

As a result of conflict, Serbia has over a million refugees and internally displaced persons, many of whom do not have ID documents. Parents born in the former republic of Yugoslavia are now citizens of independent states which may not be the states they were born in, and ID documents may have been lost, destroyed or not renewed. As a result their children were not registered in Serbia because parents themselves did not have documentation. Pomo Deci's work with parents has focused on building trust, emphasising the importance of registration, implementing practical strategies for registration and influencing law and policy. Registration is vital for children to access health care eg vaccinations and schooling. Trust building with parents in order to share personal information was key as were community development approaches, for example community members could act as witnesses for children born at home who could then be registered. In March of this year the impact of the programme on policy was evidenced in the law on Pre School education. Here it was stated that 'Pre-schools are obliged to accept all children even when they do not have proof of identity'. This example shows the inter-generational impact of conflict for children even in a post conflict situation when it is vital to address issues for parents in order to break negative trans-generational cycles.

Early Years Setting

Training for practitioners is the predominant emphasis of the majority of programmes the group examined. The focus and content of this training differed in each context. In Serbia and Northern Ireland there was a focus on curriculum and in Serbia and Nepal on improving quality. In Colombia, Serbia, Palestine and Nepal, training focused on dealing with and understanding the effects of trauma on children.

In Northern Ireland and in Georgia, there was an added focus on practitioner training on recognising and dealing with the effects of conflict on the adult. In Colombia, Northern Ireland and El Salvador there was an explicit emphasis on peacebuilding in the curriculum for young children. In Chad which had no actual provision of early years settings, the starting point for training was training volunteer community Animators.

Featured Example: What happens in the transition from informal to formal approaches? Gardens of Mothers and Children in Albania

Initially the Gardens of Mothers and Children in Albania were established in family homes and fathers had to consent to meetings in their homes as well as for their wives to go to other people's homes. In order to sustain these centres, they moved into school buildings but it was 'as if a drawbridge went up' as women don't go into schools and only fathers come to school meetings.

This was a major loss in capacity as the ratio is one educator to support forty children. So while the government would support the salary of one educator and the local authority would support the space there were crucial gaps. When the community was asked what the settings in schools needed, fathers volunteered to paint and get tables and chairs, so the physical space was there, but there was not the same regard for what was actually happening with the children. This was the maternal domain. This example demonstrates that with the transition from community based models to government supported services, the nature of provision is altered. As in this case, gender is an important dynamic in the transition where women often lead in parental/community based models, this can change when these are mainstreamed.

Wider Community

A key aspect which can be observed across a range of contexts is that working on improving ECD mobilises families, communities and NGOs to work across agencies and across interest groups. In Serbia, the NGO network through gaining trust with families, provided the main link between families and the system. In Northern Ireland work with parents was connected to work with community based management committees and with Boards of Governors in the formal education sector. In Palestine project workers, particularly those working in safe spaces, are seen as empowering forces with a particular focus on the role of women. Where parents have lost the ability to protect they have broadened this circle of care around the child to incorporate neighbourhood facilities such as youth groups, local authorities and neighbourhood activists.

In Colombia, community leaders participated in inter-institutional committees and in Lebanon, the network of NGOs established working relationships with Lebanese and Palestine dialogue committees. Similarly in Chad, the programme was used as a vehicle to get NGO agencies working with the Ministry of Education and in Nepal, the Resource Centres carried out research to influence government policy.

Featured Example: Building a social movement through working with families and communities - CINDE In Colombia

Working with families through community development and social movement processes is the cornerstone of CINDE's approach. When the programme started 20 years ago there was no pre-school provision and CINDE trained parents, mainly women, as community leaders to expand pre-school education. The 'tool' used is the community meeting and identifying what the particular needs are for young children in that community and as such the work has a

different character in each community. At meetings CINDE provided toys and resources to stimulate thinking around cognitive development and as a result of doing this in an environment of safety and trust, conversation and discussion ensued around children's emotional development. The group conducted a small scale, longitudinal social research study supported by the Van Leer Foundation into the impacts on children who participated 20 years ago. The research study found lasting effects of the programme into adulthood when participants were measured against a control group. The fact that the children were from a small isolated community on the Pacific Coast helped eliminate other factors and verify the study. The government has now adopted the NGO approach as National Policy.

Research

The resources and capacity to carry out research on ECD interventions was variable in the different contexts examined. In Northern Ireland the research and evaluation of the MIFC through a large scale randomised controlled trial was differentiated by scale and resources from the other contexts. The research and evaluation of the MIFC demonstrates the impact of evaluation on programme quality and reflective practice, on donor support for ECD programmes as well as the impact on evidence based advocacy. It also demonstrates the importance of partnership work between ECD organisations and universities.

A number of the programmes examined had strong links with universities, notably CINDE in Colombia, Nepal and Cape Town in South Africa. The impact of ECD provider/University partnerships builds mutual capacity, giving ECD providers access to external evaluation methods and academic partners access to practice at grass roots level. A key feature of University/ECD partnerships however must be the focus on the practical child rights impact of interventions at all stages.

While a number of contexts had access to academic partnerships for research and evaluation, a significant number did not. Many relied on participatory methods or self evaluation to measure the impact of interventions. There are advantages and disadvantages to external evaluation and self evaluation. External evaluation of the type demonstrated in Northern Ireland, a large scale randomised controlled trial, is a valuable strategy for advocacy and demonstrating impact to donors as it is viewed as an objective measurement of impact. Implementing a large scale research and evaluation has significant resource implications and this type of research/evaluation was not typical in the group.

In Lebanon, pre and post testing was carried out on the programme supplemented by focus groups and questionnaires. In Palestine, health outcomes were measured and the programme was adapted accordingly. Similarly in Iraq, small scale research and self evaluation was used to improve programming. In Nepal, the Resource Centre disseminated evaluation through a Journal of ECD thus influencing government policy. In Serbia evaluation was also used as a lobbying tool for legislative change in relation to registration. There is a high level of interest in the group on improving evidence based practice and strengthening the partnership between academic/research bodies and ECD providers. It is also acknowledged that there is a significant degree of resourcing which must accompany this. This is where the sharing of research and practice through the international network is in itself a significant resource.

Governance

Many successful ECD initiatives were used to lobby government for policy and legislative change. In Serbia a new model law was developed around the registration of children. In Chad information from programming was used to lobby on Orphans and Vulnerable Children, Child Labour and protection from sexual abuse. In Nepal, where schools were often taken over, pressure was put on government to stand by resolutions. In Northern Ireland, information from programming and research was utilised to lobby government and influence early years, cohesion and community relations policy. In Colombia the Family and Community Centres (FCC) changed the relationship between communities and governance where a community development model replaced a social service model of ECD.

> **Featured Example: Using Research to influence and revise Early Childhood Policy: Resource Centre for Child Development Nepal**
>
> The Resource Centre for Child Development in Nepal has conducted research on the effects of conflict on young children and has disseminated the results to advocate for children and families. A Journal of Early Childhood Development is produced to help provide guidance to those working with young children.
>
> Initially in 2002 a research study was done which demonstrated that children with ECD exposure had better outcomes than those without. This influenced government to give increased priority to ECD. Additionally, there are two types of ECD approaches in Nepal, school affiliated and community based. Again research studies showed community based approaches to be more effective and these were accordingly funded by government. In Nepal there is a developing culture of policy informed by research and importantly the Resource Centre is now involved in evaluating the impact of policy and making revisions in the light of this. This demonstrates the ongoing cycle of policy influence and evaluating impact.

Media

In many situations of conflict a key challenge is to harness the media to publicise the plight of young children either within the country or externally to attract donor aid as was the case in Chad. In Iraq, the ECD programme got media support to advocate for children and in Lebanon the launch conference for the legislative study hosted a media workshop to highlight the recruitment of child soldiers. In Nepal the print media was used to highlight the needs of young children through pamphlets and resolutions.

In Northern Ireland the media was utilised in a different way, as an engagement tool with young children as the key audience. A series of cartoons was developed for public broadcast to communicate a respect for diversity and address prejudice in an age appropriate way.

Through all of these initiatives, the media is recognised as an essential tool in mobilising support and raising awareness of the impact of conflict on young children. From a child rights perspective it is important that the image of the young child portrayed in the media can vary. The child can be portrayed as vulnerable to invoke compassion or seen as a person with

rights and capacity whose resilience must be supported to deal with the impact of conflict. Both perspectives reflect a reality, however in the longer term, the image of the child as being resilient but needing support is more sustainable and empowering in building for the future.

Featured Example: Northern Ireland: Early Years, Using the Media to promote the child as powerful social actor

The image of the child which informs the approach in the Media Initiative For Children in Northern Ireland is of the child rich in potential, strong, powerful and competent. From a right based perspective, it is vital that children are viewed as citizens and social actors capable of influencing change. The vulnerability of the child in conflict is recognised but does not become the defining characteristic. The MIFC is innovative in that children themselves are the target audience and the cartoon messages depict children as social actors, modelling empathy and problem solving. The approach is evidenced through research to bring about significant attitudinal and behavioural change among children. The results of a large scale randomised controlled trial showed the programme to be robust in that that the outcomes were transparent, objective and replicable. In this way an innovative and experimental child rights based programme has through research demonstrated both impact and potential for replicability across contexts.

The International Network on Peace Building with Young Children, whose members make up the Peace Building Learning Group, has secured funding from the European Union under the PEACE III Programme to produce and distribute 250 tool kits for early years practitioners throughout the world, the content of which will include resources related to the Media Initiative for Children.

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6. Conclusion

The practical content of ECD programmes is important across all situations and there is a shared concern about the quality of information and research that informed the approach to ECD. There was equal concern however that programmes were grounded in the knowledge of the local cultural dynamic at family and community level. High quality programmes need to be grounded in local knowledge and built on trust as well as informed by academic research on child development. Only then can impact be measured effectively using research tools that are child and family focused.

A fundamental aspect of developing programmatic approaches to support young children in conflict situations is defining and communicating a child rights approach. The image of the child that informs the approach to ECD must emphasise rights and capacity as well as recognising vulnerability. It must also challenge perspectives and practices which undermine the child. Approaches must be cognisant of local culture, practices and perspectives but be prepared to challenge these where they contravene the rights and best interests of children eg a culture of acceptable physical chastisement of young children or believing the birth of a child with a disability to be a curse or punishment on the family. These beliefs and practices can only be challenged effectively where there is trust established and alternative strategies supported. Legislation and policy in isolation is not enough. It is vital however that a child rights approach is developed with, and not for, the local community as imposing an outsider view of childhood will neither be accepted or effective. (Wessells and Montiero, 2009).

In supporting parents and families, issues of gender and culture, the role and status of women and men both official and unofficial must be considered. Often, mothers have the core role within community development approaches to ECD even if the approach for involvement is made equally to both parents. Effective community development approaches often support unofficial matriarchal structures of child rearing and can strengthen the leadership of women in communities. However, in some situations when this approach is institutionalised eg within schools, maternal involvement cedes and more traditional patriarchal structures take over. The different impact of war and conflict on men and women and how this affects child rearing is another consideration. The paternal capacity to protect the family is often diminished by war and the interaction of conflict, poverty and displacement affect both male and female roles. In communities where violence against women in the home goes unchallenged, this can be reflected in children's behaviour whether internalised as fear or in imitating, violent and aggressive behaviour.

In discussions it also emerged that the generalisation of the terms child, family and community whatever the cultural context need to recognise that conflict impacts differently depending on the circumstance. This may be because of the intensity of conflict in particular areas or because of differentials of poverty and affluence within communities. The correlation of poverty and high impact of conflict is observable in most situations. Other differences such as rural/urban and in relation to access to services were also observed. Inequalities among children were important to recognise and the particular needs of Orphans and Vulnerable Children, children with disabilities and refugee children were noted.

The issue of the policy and legislative influence of ECD programmes is made more complex in conflict. Here again the interconnection between the different social systems or layers is

important. In some situations eg Albania and Azeribajan there is an existing 'in principle' policy but this is not reflective of practice on the ground. There was also a disconnect between policy making and research, although in some situations eg Nepal, research bodies were involved not only in developing but in revising policy. An aspect that is particularly characteristic of policy making in situations of conflict was the 'politicisation' of policy making. This is where a policy will be either supported or opposed depending on the political perspective it is seen as emerging from. In this way, the importance of cross party support or an agreed/shared 'manifesto' on early childhood can be an effective strategy.

The Learning Group has mapped programmes against the programmatic tool from contexts that are experiencing different stages of conflict. It was agreed that at all stages of conflict, the needs of young children as impacted upon across all the social systems are important. Primacy must be given to supporting the immediate circle of care surrounding the child, but as the mapping shows, all of the social layers are interconnected. If for example parents are traumatised and their capacity diminished, the wider community must be mobilised. Key concepts, for example of safe space may mean different things at different stages. It may denote primarily physical safety in the peak of conflict as in Gaza or Iraq and psychological safety in a post conflict situation such as Northern Ireland. Learning Group members from Palestine felt that at the peak of conflict 'there was not the luxury of research' yet at the same time felt that imported and sometimes untested psycho social models contravened the ethic of 'do no harm.' These observations highlight the importance of a shared quality knowledge base on ECD and conflict where programmatic content, research and advocacy is communally held and learning from a situation of stability can be used in contexts where resources and capacity would not otherwise support this.

The Learning Group agrees that the development and evaluation of ECD programmes in countries affected by conflict is complex. The Group feels however that the Programmatic Framework offers a tool to assist all those involved in the design, development and evaluation of such programmes to consider the areas in society that can affect the rights, needs and development of young children.

The Framework enables the following questions to be considered:

- Can we apply the framework in planning new programmes or in developing existing programmes?

- What is the mapping exercise telling us?

- Are there gaps in impact/influence on any of the systems?

- If so, how can we be more active in influencing that area?

- What is the common ground between programmes?

- What can we learn from other programmes, including negative learning?

- Has the importance of evaluation / quality been observed?

- What internal/external research can we access to test impact?

Much of the initial thinking of this Learning Group was influenced by involvement in the seminal work by Connolly and Hayden "From Conflict to Peacebuilding". This asserted that "The Early Years Sector has considerable potential to contribute to peace building and to advocate for children nationally and internationally." (Connolly and Hayden, 2007).

The development of the Programmatic Framework through a collaborative, elicitive process we hope is a contribution to framing and analysing that knowledge base. The Programmatic Framework places young children's needs and rights at the centre of our thinking in relation to war and conflict. It is our belief that this is essential not just for the wellbeing of our children but for the building of sustainable peace across generations.

"Effective investments in the early years are a cornerstone of human development and central to the success of societies. Indeed, our planet provides no examples of highly successful societies among those who have ignored development in the early years." (INEE 2009).

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Appendix 1

Mapping of Programmes Being Delivered in Conflict Regions

This mapping exercise shows how programmes known to the Learning Group, are addressing the areas identified in the Programmatic Framework as having the most effect on children's development. We have mapped the information known to us, about the programmes.

Programme Name: The Media Initiative for Children Respecting Difference Programme
Country/Region: Northern Ireland
Developed By: Early Years – the organisation for young children
Stage of Conflict: Post Conflict /Peace Building

Cultural context in which the programme was developed

This programme and the cultural context in which the programme was developed have already been described in depth in this paper. It is therefore not necessary to do this again, except to remind us that Northern Ireland has emerged from a prolonged period of armed conflict and although cease fires were agreed more than a decade ago Northern Ireland remains a deeply divided society with Catholics and Protestants living parallel lives.

The programme will now be mapped across the circles in the Programmatic Framework of the child, family, early years setting, wider community, research, media, economics and governance, to evaluate the extent at which the programme is addressing these areas.

Child

This intervention programme targets children aged 3-6 years old and supports them to develop positive attitudes and behaviours to those who are different to themselves. It uses cartoon messages and developmentally appropriate resources to make a respecting difference approach an integrated experience for young children within the early years curriculum. The approach is rights based and focuses on children's wellbeing and emotional intelligence. Children are supported to develop empathy and unlearn prejudices.

Family

The programme works with parents and grandparents building on the philosophy of parents as equal and active partners in the education of their children. Workshops are provided for parents to help them become aware of how children develop prejudices. The workshops provide parents with an opportunity to reflect on their own first memories of difference and this encourages them to talk to their children about diversity issues. Resources in the form of finger puppets, story books and a DVD of the media messages have been developed for parents to use with their children. Projected outcomes for parents involved in the programme are: an increased recognition of the importance of doing diversity work with young children and type of approaches required; increased confidence in dealing with diversity issues with young children; a reduction in prejudices held about others in relation to race, disability and religion.

Early Years Setting

Staff working with young children receive comprehensive training, resources and ongoing support to help them support children to develop positive attitudes to difference and unlearn prejudices. A Service Design Manual has been developed to support practitioners to implement the programme naturally into their early year's curriculum and obtain positive outcomes for children and parents. At the end of the intervention the following outcomes are predicted:

1. A reduction in prejudices held about others in relation to race and disability (Cognitive)
2. Increased positive feelings towards others in relation to race and disability (Affective)
3. Increased general willingness to be inclusive of others (Behavioural)
4. Increased willingness to be inclusive of those who are different in relation to race and disability (Behavioural)
5. Increased ability to recognise instances of exclusion
6. Increased ability to recognise how being excluded makes someone feel
7. Increased awareness of and positive attitudes towards other cultures and traditions (re: race and religion)

A critical aspect of the programme is the ongoing support provided by an early year's specialist to the early years setting. The overall aim of this critical friendship is to support improvement through empowerment, by demonstrating a positive regard for people and providing an informed critique of processes and practices.

Early Years provides ongoing support for practitioners and teachers implementing the MIFC Respecting Difference programme through an Early Years Specialist support system. This support takes the form of regular visits to the early years setting, clustered training and support meetings, engagement with parents and management committees and the involvement of local communities.

The role of the early years specialist was grown in Northern Ireland to support early years settings in providing high quality care and education for children and families in their local communities. It is based on the role of the pedagogista which was developed in Reggio Emilia. The early years specialist is educated to at least a primary early years degree and is trained in the MIFC Respecting Difference approach.

The Wider Community

Management Committees of early years groups and Boards of Governors in schools receive training to help them put in place the principles of community development and to develop inclusive policies for children, parents and families throughout the community.

Research

The programme has been subjected to rigorous evaluation since it was first developed in 2004. Outcomes were set for children and parents to see how their attitudes changed as a result of being involved in the programme. Pilot research was carried out when the programme was first developed and showed measurable results after just three weeks.

A large Randomised Controlled Trial was carried out after the programme had been further developed. The learning from this research will be used to develop the programme further and to influence funders and policy makers. Overall, the randomised trial found strong and robust evidence that the Media Initiative Respecting Difference Programme is effective in improving outcomes in young children in relation to their socio-emotional development and awareness of and attitudes towards cultural differences.

Moreover, these effects represent the 'added value' to preschool settings that the programme provides in enhancing socio-emotional learning and promoting understanding of and respect for differences compared to their usual methods and resources.

Media

The cartoon messages are shown on national television three times a year for a three week period to give support and recognition to the programme. All forms of media, including radio and newspapers are used to promote the programme to the community, policy makers and funders.

Economics

Funding has been sought from a range of funders, including the Department of Education, Atlantic Philanthropy, the International Fund for Ireland and the European Union Peace Programme, to train, resource and support early years staff, parents and management committees to implement and support the programme.

The programme represents excellent value for money as the research shows that the programme has the potential to not only make a difference for young children but also their parents and those who work with them. The cost of making the programme available to a family has been calculated at approximately £156 per family. These costs would seem to be very modest in comparison with the cost to governments of dealing with the legacy of the conflict.

Governance

The evidence from the research that the programme can make a difference will be used to influence early years policy. The aim is to go to scale with this programme and make it available to all children aged 3-6 on the island of Ireland.

Conclusions

The Media Initiative for Children Respecting Difference Programme is clearly working across the different areas in the framework. The Learning Group discovered very few programmes addressing all of these areas and at this level.

By using the framework as a tool to map the programme, reflections can be focused on the different layers affecting the child and assessments can be made as to which sections should be the focus for future work.

The mapping of programmes from around the world onto the programmatic framework will raise awareness of how other early childhood programmes are addressing these areas and this may support further development of the MIFC programme.

For example, as discussed in paper one, the Learning Groups are aware of the complexity of evaluating early childhood programmes. Being aware of some of the methods used in other programmes may influence future evaluation of the MIFC.

Appendix 2

Programme Name: Social Inclusion of Marginalised Children in South Serbia
Country/Region: Serbia
Developed By: Pomoc Deci
Stage of Conflict: Post Conflict /Peace Building

Cultural Context in which the programme was developed

Serbia is a post-conflict country with many problems. The system that was functional before the conflicts was destroyed during the conflicts. Although it has been under reconstruction many aspects of the system are still not functioning properly, either in theory or in practice. For instance, before the conflicts, the coverage of all children by mandatory education stood at almost 97 percent, whilst now it is around 75 percent. A similar situation regarding coverage is evident in the medical and social system.

At the local levels, interethnic tensions are still high and there are cases when children and adults from certain minorities would be refused registration by an official belonging to a different ethnic group.

In many instances the cultural and traditional habits and customs of certain ethnic groups would also hamper the procedure. For example, in rural areas it would be unacceptable for a Roma woman to travel to another town by herself and since a mother would have to appear in front of the registration officer in person, unless company was provided to the mother she would not go on her own.

Serbia also has a culture where some parents were never registered and therefore the identity of the child cannot be traced back to them. For example, some parents were born in former Yugoslav republics which have since become independent states. So when original ID documents expire or are lost (or even were destroyed in the process of fleeing or attempting to prove relevant asylum status) these people could not travel back to their original place of birth to renew them because they could not pass newly established international borders without proper valid documents or were afraid of being trapped in their original state with the rest of the family staying in Serbia. For those children that were born in their original state, it is also very difficult to prove that they are the offspring of the people who claim to be their parents since there are no official notes made about the fact of birth.

All training sessions and workshops involve parents and community activities. A mandatory topic has become the importance of having personal documents, keeping them in a safe place and the necessity of keeping them up to date and valid.

Challenges

All the above issues outline obstacles and problems in the delivery of our programme which slow down and sometimes even stall the process of registering children and their parents.

The mistrust and sometimes fear held by many individuals to declare themselves and their children as people without personal documents prevents them from asking for assistance

whilst the complicated bureaucratic procedure also makes the process seemingly above their competences. Added to this ethnic based discrimination at local levels, bribery and corruption at higher levels and the inability to change the legal system at the central level slows down the process and prohibits many people from acquiring the documents they need. Equally this sometimes prevents Pomoc Deci from being able to assist them and prevents children from gaining access to regular basic medical care and education.

Addressing the Problems

The programme addresses all of the above issues at various levels. At local levels training and support to local grassroots organisations helps overcome fear and builds trust by the parents to come forward and ask for assistance and provide all necessary personal data and existing documents in order to assist the registration process. At municipal levels frequent visits, discussions and partnership building with municipal departments creates the atmosphere to lower ethnic discrimination; minimise the consequences of corrupted officials and promote child, minority and human rights to the registration of name and identity. At state levels Pomoc Deci is actively participating in various working group and is a member of various national partnerships lobbying and participating in efforts for systemic changes in the legal, educational, social systems.

Child

This programme is based in South Serbia where ethnic and political tensions and divisions are still present. Implicit in the programme is the prevention of child and youth trafficking, which is also on the rise. For children, several of the aspects tackled include:

- registration of non-registered children
- inclusion into early childhood services
- inclusion and assistance to children to enrol and stay in the educational system for as long as possible

Once a child becomes legally visible and has his/her name and ID papers they can exercise any and all human and child rights from the right to the name and identity; protection; development and participation.

To date, Pomoc Deci has managed to register 395 children and for 230 other children the process is underway.

Family

The programme first tries to obtain all available documents of any person in the family regardless of the document's expiry date. If the child's parents are not registered or do not have documents, the grandparents are traced and the registration process for the mother is started first.

All of the newly registered now officially exist and can start rebuilding their lives in a post conflict situation to start their lives on an equal basis with others and therefore lowering some of the potential frustrations that could lead to new conflicts.

To date, Pomoc Deci has managed to register 241 parents and for another 109 parents the process is underway.

Early Years Setting

Training is made available for teachers' assistants, pre-school and elementary school teachers in areas related to the improvement of education from pre-school to university levels of education in order to provide an environment for children which is productive and feels safe.

The Wider Community

In order to register children for the first time, or to prove their right to Serbian citizenship, especially when their parents are or used to be the citizens of now different states, co-operation among various stakeholders and institutions at all levels is necessary.

A whole network of local NGOs that help to solve this problem has been established and their co-operation has been developed to cover many other societal and community problems. Other bodies such as local municipal registration offices in Serbia, local departments of the Ministry of Interior, local and higher courts, Health Centres, offices for refugees and the Ministry of Local Government and Self-Governance are all contacted and asked for cooperation. Embassies of the states that emerged from the former Yugoslavia and even civil society organisations which deal with similar problems in these countries are also contacted on a case by case basis.

The local NGOs have gained the trust of both families and administration as partners and act as a link between the individual and the system and a key point in assisting families, communities and the State on the road to rebuilding the society after the years of conflict.

Research

Evaluation has been carried out several times over the past five years both internally and externally. Internally, Pomoc Deci has been evaluating such aspects as the response from the parents and their change in attitude; the behaviour of children once they are accepted by pre-schools and elementary schools; the pace at which they develop as well as the rate of confidence gained by the local NGOs; the willingness of local administrations to deal with this problem; the effects of changes made at the operational levels of the courts and the necessary changes to be made to the laws.

International partner organisations evaluated the results of the activities and there have been three external evaluations of these activities made by the independent research agency contracted to evaluate the programme at several stages and phases.

The evaluations have been carried out in order to see what works well in the field and at the institutional level; to adapt the approach if and when necessary and to gain a basis for lobbying for a new model law on acquiring personal documents.

Pomoc Deci has developed a study of the causes of non-registered children, parental backgrounds and trends. Several amendments to the laws related to the mandatory education to include children even when they have no ID papers have been adopted as per recommendations from Pomoc Deci.

Media

Video has been used to capture some of the work of the programme. Pomoc Deci would like to extend the use of the media to promote positive messages and is very interested in the Media Initiative for Children Respecting Difference Programme developed in Northern Ireland. Some discussions have already taken place to explore how the Media Initiative programme could be adapted to be delivered in a contextually appropriate way in Serbia.

Economics

The situation in the labour market is even worse due to the consequences of the conflict, bombing in 1999 and the world financial crisis. The unemployment rate at the country level is around 20 percent and in south Serbia, where we are implementing the major part of our programme, in some municipalities it stands at 80 percent.

Governance

After three years of working in the field, efforts to make the relevant State bodies aware of the extent of the problem of non-registered children reached several local, central and international organisations including the Ministry of Education and Interior who understood both that the legislation had to be changed and the fact that there were many people (both children and adults) who physically existed but legally were non-existent had to be dealt with. A new model law about acquiring the personal documents has been developed in a dialogue and joint work with Pomoc Deci, which had field experience in this issue, so some of the previously impossible cases to solve have now been recognised and the legal environment for solving this problem in a systemic way has been established.

The society is very politicised and many things depend solely on particular party affiliation at local and central levels. The level of corruption is very high and in some instances the legal procedure lasts extremely long only because the people in charge expect to get financial reward for the services for which they receive salaries. Towards the end of 2009, almost all managers of the registration offices for displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohija were sacked and charged for bribery.

Appendix 3

Programme Name: Peace Zones for Children
Country/Region: Iraq
Stage of Conflict: Peak (Stalemate)

Cultural Context in which the programme developed

Iraq is a patriarchal society and gender inequality is a real problem. Male preference is the issue and females are neglected more so than males. Males are more likely to be registered in the kindergartens and the elementary schools. Poor, non- educated people tend to have large families and do not value education for their children. Many parents deal with their children in a violent way and corporal punishment is also an issue in schools.

Child

In the area north of Babylon good school environments and kindergartens were developed for both under threes and older children and peace zones for children were created. Psycho-social programmes for children using art, singing, sport, team work, respect for each other, problem solving and the Koran were incorporated into the curriculum. There was a concentration on making school attendance possible for all children and children with post traumatic stress were protected drawing on research by Stuart Shanker.

Family

Support was provided for parents who had been affected by violence. Help was also given to parents to support them to keep their children in school.

Early Years Setting

North of Babylon teacher training programmes were put in place. Examples of these were programmes consisting of 4 x 3 day modules over the year. Priority was given to teachers in districts most affected by conflict and poverty and examples of modules covered included awareness of what to do in a conflict situation. Support was provided for teachers through training to understand the effects of trauma on children and on themselves.

Counselling was provided for teachers who were traumatised by such things as loss of their own children, or suffering from grief and poverty.

Training also focused on changing behaviour and attitudes by introducing new techniques such as role play, group work and conflict resolution skills. Peer support for teachers was encouraged and the role of the teacher as leader and motivator for children, parents and communities was encouraged. Teachers became peace builders. Relationships between teachers, education managers and educational counsellors were developed.

Wider Community

Outreach programmes were put in place for rural areas and intersectional activities at village level and district levels in primary health were implemented. Working with colleges, universities, social workers and NGOs locally, nationally and internationally and using hope from places like Northern Ireland was also promoted for children's well being.

Influential people such as religious leaders, political leaders and university staff were used to advocate for young children.

Research

Small descriptive, non intervention evaluation to access the extent of problems and causes was carried out assessing who was most affected, when, where and how. Evaluation of the teacher training programme was carried out using pre and post testing to measure the increase in teachers' knowledge. Evaluations were used to improve the training.

Media

Getting support from the media to advocate for children was key to the programme. Case studies of other programmes that use the media effectively, like the Media Initiative for Children in Northern Ireland, were gathered to see if something similar could be replicated.

Economics

Although a rich country, the allocation of money provided to the education sector and for caring for young children is very limited. There is a great need to invest in building suitable kindergarten and school environments as well as relevant teacher training programmes. The capacity building of human resources through scholarships for peace building specialists is also necessary.

Governance

Iraq is a country which has a relatively young population where approximately 41 percent are under the age of 15 years. They deserve an education system that is rich in opportunities.

Dogmatic teaching in classrooms should be replaced with a new learning environment based on skills, innovation and meritocracy. Vocational training schemes for teachers and school administrators should become a high priority objective.

Equally important is to redeploy the most enduring educational institution, namely the family, in a partnership of teaching/learning with the schools to provide life skills and respect for diversity which are fundamental to human security.

The rebuilding of Iraqi society is making a slow progress due to the deteriorating security situation. This has been further exacerbated by the lack of a coherent strategy that focuses on the protection and empowerment of people.

Such a strategy, based on a human security framework, would emphasise the linkages among the many issues affecting people's lives in Iraq. Educating children and providing jobs for the jobless and homes for the homeless should become part of the same package aimed at promoting reconciliation and peace and advancing social and economic revival.

Appendix 4

Programme Name: Children as a Zone of Peace
Country/Region: Nepal
Stage of Conflict: Post Conflict

Cultural Context in which the programme was developed

Many children in rural and remote areas of the country are first generation learners. Around 40 percent of the population above 15 years of age are still illiterate. Most of the parents of the children enrolled in the formal schools currently have never been enrolled in schools. The high rate of children's enrolment (NER 93%) in primary school is a big achievement. However, there is a big gap between the children living in urban and rural areas and children belonging to rich and poor families as well as children among the high-caste groups and ethnic minorities and lower-caste groups such as *dalits* (untouchables).

There is a growing awareness among the parents on the importance of education. However, the quality of education and teaching learning activities that take place in the formal schools are not at the desirable level especially in the schools located at the rural and remote areas. The children belonging to rich families and those who can afford go to the private schools. Those who cannot afford go to public or government aided schools. The children enrolled in the public schools have to bear a high rate of opportunity costs because most of the children in these schools have to lend their hands for the survival of their family from a very young age. They do not get appropriate health care, nutrition or support in their learning. As a result of this there is a high rate of school dropout and low achievers.

Challenges in the Delivery of Programmes

Public schools can be viewed as one of the more easily accessible social and public institutions. There is a direct influence of the major political parties and their sister organisations on school teachers and students. The major political parties perceive the educational institutions as recruiting grounds for their cadres and indoctrinating ideologies. Moreover, in the name of child participation, parties use and involve school children for their political demonstrations and rallies. Use of school premises and school children for political and armed group purposes is one of the major problems. As a result, the regular operations of teaching-learning activities in the schools are adversely affected.

How the Programme Addresses These Problems

Declaring school and children as a zone of peace is expected to keep the schools free from political activities. It aims to develop healthy, safe and protective learning environments. A national coalition of NGOs, INGOs and the UN has been formed to advocate and implement the program. Various committees such as Schools as Zones of Peace (SZOP) monitoring committee, mobilization of Child Protection Committee and Child Clubs have been formed to monitor the code of conduct developed.

The SZOP codes of conduct are prepared with the participation of all stakeholders through group work and they receive written commitment from all participants. A SZOP is declared in

the presence of community people, students, teachers, SMC, political parties and other stakeholders at the school.

Some of the generic criteria for SZOP code of conduct are:

- There is neither corporal punishment, nor gender based violation and discrimination
- Students and teachers are free from being used by political parties and armed groups
- Students, teachers, PTA and SMC members are aware about SZOP
- The written code of conduct is placed outside the school building so that it could be accessible to the general public and students.

Child

During the conflict safe spaces were created for children through the 'Children as a Zone of Peace Campaign'. Shelter, education and counselling services were provided and ten resolutions were developed to safeguard the physical and emotional wellbeing of children. Outreach services were also provided for children in remote rural areas. During the conflict the focus was on whether children were in school or not. Now the focus has been transferred to the school and making schools more child friendly with no corporal punishment and the emphasis on education. The government has taken this on and is now in the process of bringing it into policy.

Family

Training programmes and counselling services were provided for parents and families.

Early Years Setting

Training for teachers in awareness of the effects of conflict on young children was provided as well as training on quality in childhood services. Support was given to individuals and organisations working with children and families affected by conflict.

Wider Community

A Resource Centre to try to ensure the quality of early childhood services by providing training for teachers and parents was established. The Centre carried out research on the effect of conflict on children and looked at ways of influencing government plans and policies.

Strong social networks of organisations advocating for the safety and well being of children were developed with member organisations coming together to share good practice.

Media

The media was used to highlight the plight of young children, with 573 new items appearing in newspapers between January 2001 and December 2003. Pamphlets were produced and distributed showing the ten key resolutions that were agreed to safeguard children.

Research

The Resource Centre for Early Childhood Development has conducted research on the effects of conflict on young children and has disseminated the results to advocate for children and families. A Journal of Early Childhood Development was produced to help provide guidance to those working with young children.

The School and Children as a Zone of Peace programme has to a large extent restricted the political parties ability to organise political activities in the schools and it has helped schools to regularly operate. A research study conducted in 2009 has revealed various encouraging findings.

Due to the declaration of SZOP, child rights violations have decreased in the program schools in some districts. The number of school working days has increased compared with past records. Looking at the effectiveness of the SZOP process and its outcome to increase number of school working days, Resource Persons (RPs) of the DEO have shown interested in replicating the SZOP intervention in other areas.

Economics

The education sector gets about 20 percent of its budget from other donors besides the government. There are focused programmes for displaced children with money being used to establish temporary classrooms. Similarly, a provision has been made to recruit temporary teachers for those classrooms. There are around 39,000 such teachers.

Governance

The governments of the post 1990s were very unstable and conflict escalated. Increasingly innocent people, including children, found themselves in the crossfire and it was common for schools to be taken over by all sides for use as meeting places and shelters.

Pressure was put on government and political parties and civil society to abide by the ten main resolutions aimed at safeguarding children and influencing government policy.

Appendix 5

Programme Name: Child Soldiers in Lebanon
Country/Region: Lebanon
Stage of Conflict: De-escalation and post conflict

Cultural context in which the programme was developed

The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict requires those States that ratify it to ensure that nobody under the age of 18 is recruited compulsorily into their armed forces and to "take all feasible measures" to ensure that under 18 year old members of their armed forces do not take a direct part in hostilities.

States must take all feasible measures to prevent recruitment and use in hostilities of children under 18 years by armed groups. States party to the Optional Protocol must raise "in years" the minimum age for voluntary recruitment set at 15 in the Convention. Each State must make a binding declaration establishing a minimum age for voluntary recruitment and describing safeguards adopted to ensure that such recruitment "is not forced or coerced." The Preamble to the Protocol also notes that in order to "strengthen further the implementation of rights recognized in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, there is a need to increase the protection of children from involvement in armed conflict."

The Optional Protocol entered into force in February 2002. It is a fundamental children rights treaty aimed at increasing the protection of children from involvement in armed conflict by raising the age of possible recruitment of persons into the armed forces and their participation in hostilities. The proposed action is compliant with the priorities set forth mainly in Campaign 3 for " Promoting the Democratic Process" and partly in Campaign 2 " Fostering a Culture of Human Rights" since it will focus on advocacy for the ratification and implementation of the children right treaty, namely the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict.

It will disseminate and raise the awareness on the Optional Protocol, it will build the capacity and train stakeholders on ratification and implementation and it will educate particularly children on their rights and will prevent infringements and pave the way for monitoring mechanisms. It is to be noted that the action will target vulnerable groups, namely children, encompassing refugee children. Accordingly the Action falls mainly in Campaign 3 with respect to overall activities and a proportion of the action falls in Campaign 2.

Signature of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict dated 11/2/2002 constitutes a preliminary endorsement of the Optional Protocol by the Signing Country. Signing the treaty does not create a binding legal obligation but rather demonstrates the State's intent to examine the treaty in good faith to determine an official position towards it. Nor does signing the Protocol commit a State to proceed to ratification. However, once the State has ratified the Optional Protocol, it has legal obligation to implement the treaty, including reforming domestic law to ensure conformity with the Optional Protocol's Provisions. Almost all the provisions of the Protocol are "non self executing" and thus they require the specific implementing legislations.

However to date, since the signature of the Optional Protocol, no actions have been taken from the governmental side in that regard.

Child

The Optional Protocol is a new treaty and thus it is not well known nationally; the majority of stakeholders do not know that it exists which justifies the lack of skills with regard to advocacy for ratification as well as subsequent implementation measures. Accordingly, this will be reflected on children in all cases. In spite of the fact that Lebanon is relatively not in a state of war, children are still used in non combat roles. Furthermore, children in cases of conflict are the most vulnerable groups and Lebanon encompasses high risk children and adolescents such as refugees, internally displaced, working and street children and children orphaned or separated from their parents. Accordingly they need protection and resilience in times of peace and war alike.

Family

Families were supported and participated in the organisation of services, along with local and international NGOs and agencies.

Early Years Setting

Safe spaces are provided for children.

Media

A Media Workshop was organised regarding the recruitment of children as child soldiers and 2000 posters and 1000 book marks produced highlighting the plight of children.

Governance

Lebanon issued Law No. 335 dated 2 August 2001 that authorized the government to ratify the International Labour Convention no. 182 related to the elimination of the worst forms of child labour including the involvement of children in armed conflict. However it was not enforced .

After the 15 year civil war ended in 1989, the disbandment of militias halted most recruitment of children. Although two armed political groups continued to use them in non-combat roles (Hizbollah and Palestinian Groups). Official sources expected Lebanon to ratify the Optional Protocol in 2004 after two years of follow-up by the Higher Council for Childhood.

Although national labor laws banned under 18s from working over six hours a day or in jobs which jeopardised their health, safety or morals the laws were not fully enforced and child labor persisted, particularly in Palestinian areas (Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, Child Soldiers Global Report, 2004).

Appendix 6

Programme Name: Colombians Helping Colombians
Country/Region: Colombia
Developed By: CINDE
Stage of Conflict: Post conflict

The Culture in which the programme was developed

Colombia has suffered from violence and conflict for over 30 years. Children have suffered from the death and displacement of family members as well as the fear of kidnapping and poverty. Internal displacement due to violent groups has affected between 3 and 4 million people and is particularly difficult for women and children. 49% of displaced households are headed by women who have to assume responsibility for the well being of the family in hostile and often violent environments, in many cases with no support. An average of 48.5 percent of the displaced population are children under the age of 18.

During their early years, many children in Colombia do not receive adequate physical, mental or emotional nourishment. As adults, they are likely to be at a disadvantage due to lower levels of education and health, and may fail to provide adequate stimulation and resources for their own children – thus contributing to the intergenerational transmission of poverty and inequality.

CINDE is an educational research and development centre, based in Colombia, with local, national and international projection. The central focus is the creation of appropriate environments for the healthy, physical and psychosocial development of young children. The main areas of action are the implementation of educational and social development projects, the testing and validation of alternative models for the solution of problems of the most excluded groups, the preparation of human talent at different levels for the design and implementation of innovative childhood programmes, advocacy and policy influencing, research and production of knowledge, dissemination of information, production and publication of materials and the incidence in child related public policies.

CINDE has developed a programme for peace entitled 'Colombians Helping Colombians'. The programme works with a strategy called the "Family and Community Centers" which aims to use the experience of CINDE in its different programmes to reconstruct the social fabric of communities, and to empower them for the creation of a healthier environment for the development of their children.

Child

The programme is a grassroots approach to dealing with individuals and community problems. At the core of the programme are Family and Community Centres (FCCs). They aim to foster environments for holistic development in young children and each centre is set up on the basis of existing services in the community, gaps in service provision, or access and the aspirations of the community.

In different areas of the country, the FCCs work with different strategies for different populations and age groups. Daycare for 2-6 year olds was provided to safeguard children while mothers were at work. Art and self expression techniques were used with children for healing purposes. Children were provided with access to health and nutrition services.

Ludic approaches to child development as The "Play to Learn Programme", as well as values training programmes as "Peace Builders Programme", are

Play to Learn and Peace Builders programmes were conducted for young children which used participatory methodologies to model, raise awareness about and build values for peace and democracy.

Family

The aim is to provide access to psychosocial services was secured for the whole family and both children and families are registered to enable them to have access to health and nutrition services. Home environments were improved to make them safe and nutritional programmes were provided for caring for children from 0-6.

Early stimulation programmes for children from 0-6 are also organised.   Mothers were supported to help them meet the social needs of their children and access to vocational training was given to the displaced to support job security.

Early Years Setting

Training for practitioners is provided and psycho-social workshops were provided to develop competences in educational agents to deal with trauma and psychological problems. Leaders took part in participatory budgets to get more resources to work with children and toy libraries for children were organised.

Wider Community

Activities for the whole community in family and community centres were organised to stimulate support systems and community leaders participated in inter-institutional committees. Community campaigns were organised to develop awareness of existing problems in children from 0-3 and organisations are stimulated to protect children and family rights.

Media

CINDE is interested in using the media more and are keen to explore if the Media Initiative for Children Respecting Difference Programme developed in Northern Ireland could be adapted for use in Colombia.

Research

CINDE has been working through the universities in Colombia to develop leaders who understand the nature of support and healing in the early years. To earn post graduate

qualifications students undertake community projects and are involved in the research and evaluation as well as participating in the processes for formulating and implementing policies and programmes.

Governance

Through this programme, communities can prioritise their own health, cultural, educational and political needs, they develop a plan of action which includes the mobilisation of people and other resources.

Economics

If extensive financing is needed, the members of the FCCs seek alternate funding sources as part of their plan. Private sector sources and philanthropic agents are enlisted to assist with early childhood and family programmes. In this way, FCCs move beyond social service facilitation to community development, fostering inter-sectoral solidarity to meet the needs of young children and their families.

Appendix 7

Programme Name: Safe Spaces for Children
Country/Region: El Salvador
Developed By: Save the Children
Stage of Conflict: Escalation

Cultural Context in which the Programme was developed

El Salvador, a Central American country approximately the size of Massachusetts, has struggled since the 16th century to maintain peace, justice and a decent standard of living for its people. El Salvador's civil war was the second longest civil war in Latin America after Guatemala, lasting from 1979 to 1992. When the conflict ended in the 1990s, some 75,000 people had been killed. The effects of the civil war still continue to impact upon the country.

El Salvador is plagued by violence and the presence of youth gangs. Migration to urban areas is high, resulting in an extremely mobile population and youth who lack the motivation to stay or invest in their community. There is a high dropout rate among disadvantaged children who start primary school unprepared.

Many rural children in El Salvador face difficult circumstances that often prevent them from developing to their full potential. Since schools can be far away, children must walk great distances to reach them, sometime through potentially hazardous terrain. This often results in absenteeism or children dropping out of school (Save the Children).

Save the Children has worked in El Salvador's rural communities since 1979. During this time, the country has experienced dramatic changes, including 12 years of civil war, a reconstruction period and natural disasters.

The *Safe Spaces for Children* programme was developed by Save the Children during the conflict.

Child

Work to secure children's safety and to provide safe spaces for children was established. Opportunities were provided for children to express their feelings so that children's emotional security and self reliance would be strengthened throughout the programme.

Family

Local groups were co-ordinated to secure safety for the whole family. Parents were encouraged to work with teachers for the well-being of their children.

Early Years Setting

Children were grouped according to age. Activities were provided so that children could express what was happening to them both at home and in school. Win-Win games were organised as part of a play for peace curriculum, with girls and boys seen as equals and collective reflection was timed into the programme.

Sports and physical education was seen as very important for children's wellbeing. The curriculum had a focus on inclusion, diversity, gender equality and conflict resolution and a peace education trainers' team was developed.

Wider Community

The Programme was used as a vehicle to get agencies together such as the Ministry of Education and NGOs to focus on children's wellbeing. Peace festivals at community level gave more visibility to the effects of the conflict.

Appendix 8

Programme Name: Addressing the Needs of Children and Families
Country/Region: Palestine
Developed By: Save the Children Federation
Stage of Conflict: De-Escalation / Escalation

Cultural context in which the programme was developed

The Peace Process with neighbouring Israel started formally in 1992 but has gone through drastic repeated failures. This has led to the eruption of a nonstop extreme wave of violence. The Oslo Agreement in 1993 provided the platform for the establishment of the Palestinian Authority that started to assume responsibility for services and governance in the West Bank and Gaza. For about seven years the peace process went through many challenges and difficulties leading to ever increasing levels of frustration and loss of trust between the two parties. During a visit from an Israeli Government Minister in 2000, soldiers who were guarding him opened fire on demonstrators killing eight. This triggered the violence that continues today.

This has resulted in extreme psychological distress to several population groups with children being the hardest hit part of the population. Some children developed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

An early childhood programme was developed in Masaken, a small community of about 4,000 residents, on the outskirts of Nablus which had suffered from very violent experiences. The aim of the programme was to address the diverse needs of the children and families that had been created by their exposure to violence.

Early childhood care and education programs are far from being comprehensive or co-ordinated and the quality of these services is not evaluated. So far, these institutions are largely education settings, especially those addressed to children above 3 years of age. There is no systematic effort in terms of staff qualifications. Work within ECD settings is low paid and training of such staff occurs sporadically with no specific curriculum to qualify such workers.

The existence of policies to govern the delivery of service is modest and not implemented in a structured manner. Licensing of ECD institutions is carried out by the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Public Safety Institute. The involvement of the Ministry of Education is minimal. However, significant efforts are being done currently towards improving the quality of ECD.

Only about 20 percent of children aged 3-6 are enrolled, with the largest provider being the private run settings. NGO run ECD institutes enjoy better standards of quality, especially in larger cities.

The content of programs addressing the early childhood period is widely variable. Academic education and religious education form the two main areas of focus in the curriculum. This is

leaving minimal or no space for personality development activities and psychosocial support activities, which are highly needed in the case of Palestine.

A common parents' perception about early childhood education institutions is that they constitute the pre-school phase of the academic life of the child. Another aspect related to parents is the perception that early childhood institutions are the place to leave the children safely while going to work.

A national forum for early years development and education is currently under formulation. It is expected that this forum will be able to develop and institutionalize ECD in the country and will develop specific policies and standards in this area. It is worth mentioning that not much is known about the Gaza situation in relation to ECD. A large transition has been done in this sector under the de-facto government towards deepening the religious education offered to this group.

The 3-6 age group is extremely marginalized in terms of access to healthcare. Children 0-3 are covered by the health insurance policy and those in the age group 6-18 are covered by the school health policy. The age group 3-6 falls outside the insurance policy and hence has no formal right to care, except within the private health sector. While the under 5 mortality in Palestine is 25 per 1000, infant mortality accounts for 18 of this number. The vast majority of deaths and injury occurring within the group 1-5 is caused by preventable home and road accidents.

Due to the severe deterioration of the economic situation and poverty affecting a significant proportion of the Palestinian population, malnutrition in its different forms is now the major physical health problem facing children in the early childhood period especially in Gaza.

While the situation has eased in general, continuous exposure to and memories of violence is causing severe mental health problems for children, especially in Gaza.

Child

A safe zone in the form of a children's centre was created, providing programmes that addressed the diverse needs of children exposed to violence. Psychological support was given to children who had been exposed to violence. Activities were structured to relieve anxiety and stress such as using puppets to help children express their experiences. Programmes promoted peace education and children's drawings reflected clear progress towards hope, reconciliation and balances emotional life.

Family

Mothers were offered health care programmes and home care programmes were offered by community caregivers. Social Counsellors supported and advised families and parents learned to use puppets with their children to help them work through their experiences. Mothers took part in health programmes.

Early Years Setting

The Early Years Centre provided a safe space where children could access toys and resources and participate in group activities structured to relieve anxiety and stress.

Training was provided for those working with young children using the empowerment model of building skills and strengths for dealing with the effects of conflict. Workshops and training was organised for mothers to help them become involved as volunteers in their children's education process. Mothers were supported to organise 'open play days' where children could get together to play and be busy and try to forget about the violence that surrounded them.

Wider Community

Community activities took place in the Children's Centre such as sports and festivals. Capacity building was developed to help communities to respond to emergency situations.

Play therapy was introduced into the school system for older children by training School Counsellors to use classroom based interventions devoted to improving pupils' sense of safety and ability to cope. Creative ways of promoting health education in the community brought a lot of joy to families.

Research

The findings from the evaluation of the health programme showed that it was well worthwhile investing in communities and in the mother. Mothers were seeking out less health care because they were taking better care of their children themselves. Improvements in the health status indicators, such as nutritional status of children, in the programme areas were noticeable.

By supporting families to look after themselves after an emergency the health care system was not over burdened with children at less risk who could be well managed at home. The programme also had the long term effect of empowering women. One of the lessons learned was that it was very important to develop programmes that have very clear objectives.
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Governance

Another lesson that was concluded from the evaluation was that the empowerment model is very important in building capacity in communities

Appendix 9

Programme Name: Child Friendly Spaces for Young Children
Country/Region: Chad
Developed By: UNICEF Chad
Stage of Conflict: Escalation

Cultural context in which the programme was developed

Chad's post independence has been marked by civil war. The conflict in Sudan in the Darfur region which resulted in a flow of more than 200,000 refugees into Chad exacerbated the already critical situation for families in the area. In response UNCHR (United Nations High Commissioners for Refugees) mounted a major operation to establish refugee camps in Chad.

The necessity and shortages resulted in the recruitment of both male and female Animators, working together. The teams represented a previously taboo situation in this Muslim region where gender segregation for workers had been the norm. Similarly children in the schools which were developed were not segregated by gender. Programmes to create safe environments for children were developed by UNICEF.

Child

One of the priorities from the beginning was to address the chronic malnutrition and then to create an environment of normalcy so that psychosocial healing could begin in the camps.

Child friendly spaces were provided for children and therapeutic feeding centres were set up. Recreational activities were provided and psychological support was given to children. The child friendly spaces made children feel safe and provided an oasis where they were kept active and engaged with both free play activities and structured events.

Family

The child friendly spaces addressed the needs of mothers and caregivers. Respite was provided for families and programmes were organised to support income generation. Classed and training were offered for adults on topics such as literacy and early childhood development. They also provided a place for distressed adults to discuss their issues and share their concerns.

Early Years Setting

Childcare facilities are not available to the majority of the population and most children are cared for by their mothers or other family members, hence the importance of the child friendly spaces.

The recruitment and training of Animators (unsalaried volunteers with no certified qualifications) from within the refugee community was carried out. It was felt that the ability to

communicate with the children and families, to reflect familiar habits and to model a calm outlook were more important traits for Animators than having had formal training. The main task for them was to develop recreational and other activities for all children within a relaxed and normalised environment.

Wider Community

Child protection committees (CPCs) were set up to assess and monitor children's rights. All members were from the refugee community and they oversaw the child friendly spaces. CPCs also had an advocacy role and organised awareness raising sessions for refugee families and other decision makers about the needs and rights of children.

Social workers and psychologists were brought in to work with families and opportunities were provided for communities to help themselves. Early childhood programme provided vehicles for addressing social justice, enhancing gender equity and empowering communities.

Media

When the refugee situation within eastern Chad was picked up by the western media, humanitarian aid began to flow in and the conditions of the general population came to the attention of international aid agencies.

Research

After intensive assessments, three main elements for child protection were identified for the Chadian children. They were:

• Legal and legislative reforms
• Social integration
• Mine-risk education

Thus the refugee crisis and the subsequent programmes prompted progressive attention to and discussion on legislative reforms and on the situation of children in eastern Chad, which may not have otherwise been addressed.

Governance

Lobbying was carried out to influence policy on:

• Orphans and vulnerable children affected by HIV/AIDS.
• Outlawing the worst forms of child labour
• Protection of children against sexual abuse and commercial exploitation
• Gender issues

Increased attention to the plight of children in the camps inevitably resulted in attention being given to children in the local areas surrounding the camps. The need to extend the child protection programme to children in the villages as well as in the camps became apparent to all.

At central government level, new draft bills were prepared to reform the penal and labour codes, outlawing the worst forms of child labour. National policy on early care and education was developed with discussions around the development of a civil code and attention to programmes aimed at curbing violence in schools.

Appendix 10

Programme Name: Enhancing the Rights of Internally Displaced (IDP) Children and Families in IDP Dense Settlements
Country/Region: Georgia
Developed By: Centre for Educational Initiatives (CEI)
Stage of Conflict: Peak (Stalemate)

Cultural context in which the programme was developed

After a brief period of independence following the Russian Revolution of 1917, Georgia was annexed by the Soviet Red Army in 1921 and in 1922 Georgia was incorporated into the Soviet Union, which lasted until the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991. Like many post-communist countries, Georgia suffered from the economic crisis and civil unrest during the 1990s. After the Rose Revolution, the new political leadership introduced democratic reforms but the foreign investment and economic growth which followed initially have slackened substantially since. Georgia contains two de facto independent regions, Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Georgia considers the regions to be occupied by Russia

Child

This project was an early childhood programme that addressed the diverse needs of children and families exposed to violence and who experienced being expelled from their homes. It aimed to create and equip ten centres for children which would act as safe zones for them.

Family

Training was provided for parents on working with children with the aim of protecting those classed as internally displaced. A child-centred methodology was used and three manuals were produced. Also opportunities were provided for them to get jobs working with children.

Awareness raising sessions were made available on appropriate child rearing practices and children's preparation for school especially in areas where there were no pre-schools.

Early Years Setting

The programme set about trying to change educators' and teachers' behaviour in dealing with trauma and the experience of being internally displaced and understanding the effects of trauma and IDP status on themselves.

The Wider Community

Activities were made available to relevant professionals and organisations, community members and local government representatives in order to lessen the sense of isolation of the IDP communities and facilitate their sense of belonging, involvement and equality.

Follow-up training, consultancy and monitoring activities were carried out to provide IDP centres with additional educational materials, to provide selected and trained displaced people with jobs and a small wage for the duration of the proposed action. The programme also aimed to foster the selected displaced people's qualification and skills of serving as competent caregivers and instructors for displaced children at the created IDP pre-school centres. This would greatly benefit the target group of children and their families and contribute to the maintenance and sustainability of the implemented practice.

Appendix 11

Programme Name: Protecting the rights of young children, families and communities
                        through integrated ECD in post conflict South Africa
Country/Region: South Africa
Developed By: Collaboration LETCEE & Children's institute University of Cape Town
Stage of Conflict: Post Conflict /Peace Building

Child

The Programme is in the context of the initial response to AIDS and the Orphan crisis and is focused on Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC). It is informed by the understanding of the continuum of vulnerability and wellbeing and both risk and protective factors in relation to child wellbeing.

South Africa has 13 million children and 3.7 million orphans. Fewer than 18.64 percent are paternal orphans due to the high mortality rate of men. Less than one third of African children live with their father. HIV prevalence is increasing with a national prevalence of 30.2 percent.

Family

The Community elected a committee in the LETCEE (Little Elephant Training Centre in Early Childhood Development) intervention to identify local 'vulnerable' families as well as family facilitators (FFs). FFs support families with young children through home visits. One FF supports 10 families. One coordinator supports 10 FFs

Early Years Setting / Community

Family facilitators come from that particular community. They take integrated ECD into homes and build relationships with families and facilitate learning through play with the young children. They empower caregivers, model good care practices and provide stimulation, guidance and exploration. The focus is on care, nutrition, health, protection and emotional wellbeing. The programme is informed by an awareness of child needs and rights, especially health seeking behaviour. The programme is aimed at early identification and prevention through the following areas:

- Champions for children
- Grow conversation
- Understand child development
- Identify local risk and protective factors
- Encourage collaborative action
- Build systems for identifying, supporting, referring and tracking
- Build partnership
- Motivate new champions

Analysis of Mbuba protective/risk factors:

Protective
- Family facilitators
- Income and nutrition
- Access to grants
- Some vegetable gardens
- Some cattle, goats and chickens
- Small income from growing wattle trees
- Committed community members

Risk factors
- Poverty
- Elderly relatives care for children
- Child only households
- Scarcity of attentive adults
- Many dangers - fires, roads, plantations, rivers, crime, abusive people
- Corporal punishment
- Only two ECD centres; inaccessible to most – distance and fees are major factors
- Barriers to meaningful access to schooling
- No aftercare
- Low literacy levels in the community

Strengthening protective factors
- Strengthening capacity of Coordinators and Community committee
- Building relationships, ownership and buy in within and across groups of roleplayers, especially clinic and referral services
- Nduna developing data base of families and children needing help

Examples of positive impacts of collaborative action
- Accessing grants and enabling documents
- Stopping corporal punishment
- Children on agenda of traditional leaders
- Children move together in groups of three or four
- Roster of caregivers at playground
- Helping individual children

Wider Community/Governance

The approach comprises systemic action research focused on strengthening the capacity of all role players:

- Families (including children), neighbours and government; FBO, service providers
- Impact positively on child wellbeing, especially in the AIDS context
- Build partnership for collaborative action

- Deepen understanding of child well being
- Identifying risk and protective factors

The programme supports an integrated approach to ECD aimed at growing the conversation about child wellbeing. It aims to include all relevant role players and facilitate collaborative action:
- Families
- Government
- All spheres: local, district, provincial and national
- All sectors: health, education, social development,
- Water and sanitation, home affairs, agriculture, etc
- Non-government
- Community and civic organisations
- Faith based organisations, etc

Not all are in the same room at the same time.

The methodology is appreciative and rights based. It is about understanding what we are doing well, imagining what our dreams are for our children and making statements in the present tense about the future. It is also about determining what help or resources are needed if any from outside the community.

The following are features which are key to the approach:

- Plan and take action - encourage individual and small group action
- Celebrating small success for motivation
- Joint action for bigger dreams
- Start cycle again and strengthen rights focus to access services and protect rights
- Use dialogue to unblock barriers

Research/ Policy

The research on the LETCEE ECD programme is collaboration between LETCEE training organisation and the Children's Institute University of Cape Town. The collaboration between LETCEE and the Children's Institute brings a capacity building approach as well as a child rights policy and advocacy focus.

Evaluation of Impact

Challenges
- Sense of hopelessness
- Much effort needed to bring all role players into conversation
- LETCEE is itself vulnerable as it struggles to raise funds
- FFs small stipend and no career path
- Poor communities (women) carry burden

- Deep poverty exacerbated by global economic crisis
- Appropriate monitoring and evaluation for complex programmes

Conclusions

- It is tempting to implement one dimensional programme that shows clear link between cause and effect
- Child rights are interdependent
- Pioneering holistic approach
- Strengthen families and communities
- Understand child development
- Work collaboratively
- Support child wellbeing and protect child rights
- Influence school curriculum and pre-service training of full range of professionals
- Communication for social change